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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 002076

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/W, AF/RSA, INR/AA, INL/AEE;
ADDIS ABABA FOR MISSION TO AU

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SUBJECT: ECOWAS VIEWS ON MILITARY INTERVENTION FORCE FOR
GUINEA, SIERRA LEONE LOGISTICS FACILITY, AND TEMPORARY U.S.
ADVISOR

REF: STATE 117180

Classified By: Acting DCM James P. McAnulty
for reasons in Sections 1.4. (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) Acting DCM and PolMilOff delivered demarche (reftel) to Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Peace and Security Commissioner Colonel Mahamane Toure in Abuja November 17. According to Toure, ECOWAS has developed contingency plans, but does not intend to send a military intervention force to Guinea, unless the United Nations (UN) or ECOWAS-appointed mediator Blaise Campaore requests one. He revealed that ECOWAS President Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas would likely leave his position within the next two to three months. The ECOWAS legal department continues to review Freetown Logistics Facility Memorandum of Agreement. Toure plans to seek a waiver of an existing hiring freeze, resulting from an audit of hiring practices, to attempt to fill proposed manager and deputy manager positions. Toure said ECOWAS does not need a temporary Peace and Security Advisor at the moment and would prefer to wait for assignment of a permanent advisor instead of a one-week-per-month visit.
END SUMMARY.

GUINEA INTERVENTION FORCE

¶2. (C) Colonel Toure told Acting DCM and PolMilOff that ECOWAS did not plan to send a military intervention force to Guinea unless the United Nations or ECOWAS Facilitator Burkina Faso President Blaise Campaore requested one. He argued that the UN retained responsibility for providing security for the International Commission of Inquiry. When pressed on the issue, Toure acknowledged that ECOWAS has developed "several contingency plans" to deploy one to two Foreign Police Units (FPUs) with a back-up Military Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) to Conakry, should the UN request such assistance. According to Toure, FPUs would provide a "better fit" for the security situation in Guinea, noting that Nigeria and Senegal have employed the FPU concept in the past. While Toure accepted the U.S. offer of using equipment stored at the Freetown Logistics Facility, he described such

equipment as "not suited" for the law enforcement units. He said ECOWAS member nations would have to provide the equipment and manpower for each FPU.

13. (C) Toure informed us that ECOWAS, Africa Union, and European Union (EU) representatives would meet with Campaore in Ouagadougou November 18 to discuss Guinea's security situation. He also indicated that Campaore had briefed President Yar'Adua during a visit to Abuja this week.

STATUS OF MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

14. (C) Toure said the ECOWAS legal department continued to review the Logistics Facility Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). He promised to seek additional details on the MOA's status, specifically asking his assistant to do follow up with PolMilOff.

SIERRA LEONE LOGISTICS FACILITY

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15. (C) Toure did not commit to the April and July 2010 deadlines for identifying candidates to take over the Logistics Facility Manager and Deputy Manager positions. He explained that ECOWAS had a hiring freeze on permanent positions that resulted from an audit of hiring practices. Toure expressed preference for permanently hired, civilian managers because ECOWAS military attaches rotated every three

ABUJA 00002076 002 OF 002

years. He said the previous military colonel who received depot manager training will return to the Gambia in a few months. Toure promised to seek a waiver to allow him to advertise the positions, but remarked that he is "not counting on a miracle." Toure, who already has position descriptions for the manager and deputy positions, asked that the U.S. provide profiles for the supervisor positions.

16. (C) Toure said ECOWAS wanted to move all equipment stored at the current Freetown facility to a new site across the bay in Lungi. ECOWAS leaders remained concerned that the equipment would be vulnerable to theft by Sierra Leone military, which occupies a base adjacent to the current facility. He averred that the Lungi location is preferable because of its relatively better access to inland destinations by road and air. He acknowledged, however, that access by sea would be more difficult due to shallow water, requiring any equipment to be shuttled by barge to ships at sea.

CHAMBAS IN BRUSSELS LOOKING FOR NEW JOB

17. (C) Toure revealed that ECOWAS President Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas had traveled to Brussels this week to interview for a position at the African Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). He expressed confidence that Dr. Chambas would receive this position and depart ECOWAS during the first quarter of 2010 -- well in advance of the February 2011 end of his current mandate. Toure predicted that Chambas, replacement would come from a francophone country within ECOWAS.

NO NEED FOR TEMPORARY PEACE AND SECURITY ADVISOR

18. (C) Toure indicated that ECOWAS did not currently need the services of a temporary U.S. Peace and Security Advisor to travel to Abuja each month. When pressed, Toure admitted that Chambas preferred to avoid any last-minute hiring

decisions just before leaving ECOWAS.
SANDERS